

Why We Disappeared

Hello comrades, I am the creator of the online publication Kollektiv. I am writing this today because I feel it is only fair our readers and contributors learn why the publication is no longer active, and why it may never be active again. I created a political account in early 2017 because of my growing interest in socialist politics. I wanted to be apart of an online community that shared my views and allowed me to express them as well as to learn from others. As my views began to shape and change, I began to see problems within the instagram community and began to feel the need to combat them. As someone who does graphic design, I figured the best way to combat what I saw as left infighting was to create a platform all types of leftists could communicate and express themselves through. This was my starting point and goal for Kollektiv. It was to put something out there that encouraged solidarity rather than focusing on what made us different.

This was a noble goal, and the two issues we released I am somewhat proud of. It was only after issue 2 however did I start feeling as though our work through Kollektiv was a useless one. Why was it useless? Well because it was made by, produced by, and made *for* the leftist instagram community. One I now find completely useless and draining. The publication never encouraged solidarity any more than the instagram community could, which is none.

Many who are active and engage in the instagram community have completely forgotten and abandoned what socialism is about in the first place. The emancipation of people. Rather than this goal, many fall into traps about being obsessed over past socialist countries and their policies and taking sides in age old debates that no longer concern the modern day American proletariat. You can hide behind gulag memes and scream at each other each day about how Stalin did nothing wrong, but you've long lost the point of what you're about.

The instagram community wasn't (and isn't) something that will further the emancipation of the proletariat. It's a inter looking pissing contest to see who's the "true" marxists and who's the "true" leftists. No one is joining the labor movement because you told them Stalin did nothing wrong. No one is taking you seriously if you're not willing to actually participate in the movement happening right now. I constantly saw people ragging on Bernie Sanders or Jeremy Corbyn because they, "participate in bourgeois democracy" but how can you expect a mass movement to form without any type of organization? Without any type of coherent policies and bodies to push it forward? As Rosa Luxemburg once said, "[b]etween social reforms and revolution there exists for the social democracy an indissoluble tie. The struggle for

reforms is its means; the social revolution, its aim.” The fact that most comrades on instagram believe that no participation in bourgeois democracy is permissible, it is not only ahistorical to our movement, it is blatant idealism.

This idealism from within the instagram community does not only render it completely ineffective, but directly opposed to the socialist struggle. This is why continuing the publication would not only not make sense, it would be a complete waste of time. Until the community goal becomes to further the emancipation of the proletariat, instead of getting engaged in pissing contests, it will remain a shame to the movement as a whole and a mar on our long rich history.

How do you increase class consciousness in a place like modern day America with gulag memes? Even if you are right, does it matter if you’re turning more people away than you are bringing in? During the 1917 revolution in Russia, the Bolsheviks came up with a slogan, “Peace. Bread. Land.” This wasn’t some clever intellectual marxist phraseology. This was a response to the material needs of the Russian people at that time. These types of slogans eventually won them support after being a small minority. It is our job as revolutionaries and socialists to take a look at the material needs of the modern day proletariat and organize ourselves to meet those needs and push our movement forward. In today’s world that might mean, “Medicare for all!” or “Black lives matter!” or “No more pipelines!” Just because these are new problems facing our modern day proletariat doesn’t mean they are bourgeois.

That being said, I found that many in the community were so obsessed with Stalin and the USSR they had been rendered completely reactionary. Why support BLM if Stalin didn’t mention it? Why support the LGBTQ+ community if Stalin didn’t support them? This type of thinking was surprisingly common, and very disheartening. If your ideal version of socialism was 1930s USSR under Stalin, you probably aren’t a socialist. We are not here to merely repeat history. Not only would that be useless, it’s impossible. There will never be another October Revolution, another USSR, another Stalin. History has developed since then and our material conditions have developed as well. It is idealism to think we can magically have an armed revolution in any modern day western nation. It is a material reality that the military force and brutality of the modern bourgeois state would destroy any classic militant revolution, to deny this is to deny reality itself.

That is not to say that revolution is not our aim, because any legitimate socialist movement must have their end goal as revolution, however, as history has developed so do our means of achieving this aim. Pretending that what worked 100 years ago in the most impoverished illiterate country in all of Europe will work for modern day American isn’t just idealism, it’s insanity.

I will continue doing in the real world what I had hoped to do through Kollektiv, which is join my comrades in ushering in socialism, and opposing capitalism at every turn. I urge my non reactionary comrades to do the same. We have the world to win.

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